
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

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CONTACT: Dan Tapper, 509-6259
324-9862 (Cell)

SECRETARY BYSIEWICZ DEMONSTRATES NEW VOTING TECHNOLOGY FOR BRIDGEPORT-AREA OFFICIALS

*Shows how new optical scan machines work,
answers questions of area elections officials*

BRIDGEPORT – Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today demonstrated new optical scan voting technology for local election officials at the Bridgeport City Hall Annex, showing officials from Bridgeport and area towns the type of voting machines that will serve as replacements for all of Connecticut's lever voting machines by 2007. Additionally, some cities and towns will be able to use the optical scan machines for this November's elections, Secretary Bysiewicz said.

Secretary Bysiewicz was joined by officials from LHS Associates, the company chosen earlier this month by the state to provide optical scan voting machines for Connecticut cities and towns. Optical scan voting technology, in which a voter fills out a paper ballot and then scans it into a machine for verification, is the most common form of voting technology in America today, with more than half of the counties nationwide voting on optical scan machines. Optical scan technology also provides a paper trail for every vote case, in compliance with state law and the federal Help America Vote Act.

Today's visit to Bridgeport is the seventh of twenty scheduled regional visits throughout Connecticut to meet with local elections officials, demonstrate the new technology for them, and answer any questions they may have, Secretary Bysiewicz said.

"As our office considered potential new technologies, the principles of security, accessibility and reliability guided our decision making. We chose LHS Associates' optical scan technology because this company provides a level of security needed to ensure the short-term and long-term integrity of our elections," Secretary Bysiewicz. "Much like filling out a standardized test or even a lottery ticket, the practice of filling out an optical scan ballot is something with which most people are familiar. The machines will ultimately replace our lever voting machines; this year, some towns throughout the

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state will be able to receive them for the November election, and LHS will replace all of our lever machines by the November 2007 election.

"Federal funds will cover the \$15.7 million cost of purchasing the new machines and providing the proper training for elections officials," Secretary Bysiewicz added. "We will work closely with Registrars and Town Clerks to ensure that people receive the education and on-the-job training they need."

"There is nothing more important that we do as citizens then cast a vote to select our elected leaders. The voting process must be safe and made easily available to all of us," State Representative Christopher Caruso (D-Bridgeport) said. "New voting technology is a reality and I commend Secretary of the State Bysiewicz for her leadership in advancing this technology. We appreciate her Bridgeport visit to explain and demonstrate the new optical scan voting technology that will be replacing our lever machines."

Patricia Strauss, the Town Clerk in Westport, said, "These demonstrations make it so easy for us to see the new machines and learn about them. I appreciate that these demonstrations are being held so close to us, rather than us having to drive a long distance – that is such a plus. It is very worthwhile not only for Town Clerks and Registrars, but also for moderators, representatives from the League of Women Voters, and anyone else involved in elections at the local level to come and get associated with this new equipment."

Bridgeport State Senator Edwin Gomes said, "Bridgeport has got to get its voting turnout numbers up. Anything that Secretary Bysiewicz can do to help that would be greatly appreciated. I'm hoping this new voting technology will appeal to more voters. Folks have got to realize how powerful they can become when they exercise their right to vote."

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